



Protecting Your Property From Flooding



INSTALL SEWER BACKFLOW VALVES

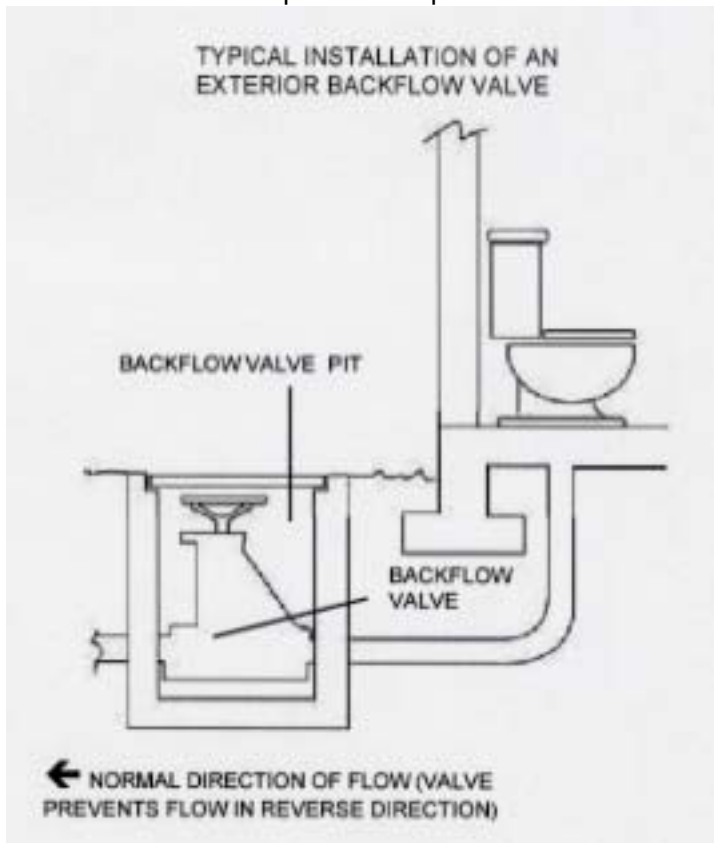
In some floodprone areas, flooding can cause sewage from sanitary sewer lines to back up into houses through drain pipes. These back ups not only cause damage that is difficult to repair but also create health hazards.

A good way to protect your house from sewage backups is to install backflow valves, which are designed to block drain pipes temporarily and prevent flow into the house. Backflow valves are available in a variety of designs that range from the simple to the complex. The figure shows a gate valve, one of the more complex designs. It provides a strong seal, but must be operated by hand. So the effectiveness of a gate valve will depend on how much warning you have of impending flooding. Among the simpler valves are flap or check valves, which open to allow flow out of the house but close when the flow reverses. These valves operate automatically but do not provide as strong a seal as a gate valve.

Tips

Keep these points in mind if you have backflow valves installed:

- ✓ Be sure to check with your local permitting office to make sure your work meets state and local codes and if a permit is required.



- ✓ Changes to the plumbing in your house must be done by a licensed plumber or contractor, who will ensure that the work is done correctly and according to all applicable codes. This is important for your safety.
- ✓ Some valves incorporate the advantages of both flap and gate valves into a single design. Your plumber or contractor can advise you on the relative advantages and disadvantages of the various types of backflow valves.
- ✓ Valves should be installed on all pipes that leave the house or that are connected to equipment that is below the potential flood level. So valves may be needed on washing machine drain lines, laundry sinks, fuel oil lines, rain downspouts, and sump pumps, as well as sewer or septic connections.

- ✓ If you have a sump pump, it may be connected to underground drain lines, which may be difficult to seal off.